

**Arlington Redevelopment Board**  
**March 25, 2019, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Senior Center, Main Room, First Floor**  
**Meeting Minutes**

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

**PRESENT:** Andrew Bunnell (Chair), David Watson, Eugene Benson, Kin Lau

**STAFF:** Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development

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The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 pm and confirmed that Mr. Benson is caught up on the March 11 meeting. He then turned to the first item on the agenda, staff presentation of articles 15, 16, and 23-25.

Ms. Raitt presented Article 15, Accessory Dwelling Units; and Article 16, Affordable Requirements.

Steve Revilak, lead petitioner on Article 16, referred to Mr. Bunnell's statement about multifamily housing creating projects that would trigger Arlington's inclusionary zoning bylaw; and Somerville's inclusionary zoning bylaw, as a good example.

Ms. Raitt continued her presentation with Article 23, and stated the petitioner stated there may not be a need to take action on this; Article 24, measurement of half-story; and Article 25, driveway slope measurements.

Patricia Worden gave her place to Elizabeth Pyle of the Residential Study Group, which had requested no action on the accessory dwelling units; she stated Inspectional Services has serious concerns about this proposal due to problems with Fire Department response and possible misuse of the units. She stated this requires further study and requested no action from the Board. She stated the ceiling heights article was endorsed by Inspectional Services and requested the Board endorse it. She stated that the driveway slope average measurements do not address public safety and might require new language.

Patricia Worden stated Article 15 is not ready for approval and the Building Inspector could not enforce it; and accessory dwelling units are more in the interest of developers than of the residents. She stated it is legal under current law to build a separate suite in a single family home to accommodate family/caretakers, and no new zoning is required. She stated information about the article is misleading/missing, and the public should be made aware of this.

Beth Elliott spoke in support of Article 15, stating that accessory dwelling units are small and not equivalent to multifamily housing, and will increase income/ethnic diversity in Arlington. They also would benefit seniors who wish to stay in their homes. She stated the new code would prevent rental abuses of accessory dwelling units. Article 16: she supports it as initially proposed, and there shouldn't be a rush to compromise before allowing Town Meeting to fully vet the proposals; she supports the Board moving forward on Articles 24-25.

Shana Cleveland stated she is surprised by the fear and anger coming through at the ARB meetings, and her research shows that the Master Plan was not developed behind closed doors but that residents had many opportunities to attend public meetings. She stated the new zoning articles are consistent with town goals, and allow for flexibility to include affordable housing, since federal programs have been gutted and affordable housing is up to developers being required to build this when they develop. She also stated accessory dwelling units would benefit seniors as a source of extra income. She requested an end to demonizing residents and Board members.

John Worden stated that Article 15 is a zombie that should be killed off permanently. He described the addition of an accessory dwelling unit as a two-family house, and the Housing Production Implementation Committee refused to put in an affordability requirement, which is hypocritical. He recommended no action at Town Meeting. If it does go forward,

someone will move to amend many elements of it. He stated Article 16 is very vague, and that developers would be getting a bonus for doing what they should in the first place.

Janice Bryman stated that residents mostly agree on proposed goals but disagree on how to achieve them, and the articles take them further from the Master Plan. She stated the divisions are huge, and the articles addressed in this meeting and the last are not ready for Town Meeting approval.

Don Seltzer requested to speak later during the general discussion. The Chair agreed.

Steve Revilak stated re: Article 15, that adu's seem to happen quite a bit already, in his opinion. Article 25: he stated that new downslope driveways have a platform at the top, instead of a steep curve. He discussed this with an audience member.

Pam Hallett spoke in favor of the accessory dwelling units, stating that without these units, elders would not be able to afford to live in Arlington. She also spoke in favor of Article 16.

Martin Hermance informed Town Meeting members that Article 15 should not be approved because it creates two family housing where there is one family, increasing density in an already dense community. He also requested they vote against Article 16 for the same reason.

Ben Rudick stated he is in favor of Articles 15 and 16, because anything that increases the housing stock would increase future affordability. He discussed misconceptions about development/affordability -- affordable housing is built at a loss, which means very expensive market rate units. He is comfortable with this tradeoff. He supports all proposed zoning articles.

JoAnne Preston attended two meetings re Article 15 -- the Housing Production Implementation Committee and the Residential Study Committee. The first favored Article 15; the second did not. She summarized the meetings and recommends no action until the Residential Study Group can thoroughly study possible hazards of living in accessory dwelling units, especially to senior citizens who face isolation as tenants or financial abuse as landlords. Re: Article 16, Arlington needs more affordable housing; there are too many loopholes to enforce inclusionary requirements, and these need to be closed before proceeding.

Susan McCabe stated that as a Town Meeting member, she is overwhelmed with respect to how she might have to vote. She spoke in favor of exploring housing options that come from accessory dwelling, but is not sure that the article is ready yet, and requires further exploration. She spoke in favor of Article 16, stating that developers have responsibility to provide affordable housing.

Kate Casa spoke in support of Articles 15 and 16. She stated Article 15 is an opportunity to provide small, flexible housing units in existing footprints, and passing it would help control the number of illegal accessory units.

#### *Recess*

Beatrice Taylor spoke in favor of Article 16. She stated Article 15 is not yet ready to move forward and requires more discussion and possible amendments.

Thomas [Danielson] off mic -- voiced his opposition to the articles (?)

Jonathan Nyberg stated it is important for Arlington to be progressive and not regressive, and spoke in favor of flexible housing and different living situations. He stated his committees have studied accessory dwelling units in other communities, and these are hard to come by and require special permits. He stated the town needs to listen to younger residents for alternatives.

Brian McBride stated he was alarmed by increased density proposals and suggested designing housing without making the town crowded and unpleasant.

Jennifer Susse stated that based on school lunch data, currently there is less and less affordable housing in Arlington; if the town does not allow additional housing and additional kinds of housing, there will be less economic diversity. She also stated that fewer teachers can afford to live in Arlington.

Aram Holman stated that Master Plan participation was meaningless. He stated some residents are concerned but should not be labeled “fearful”; and that building heights will not affect market prices. He spoke cautiously in favor of Article 15, which would benefit only the current owner of the house adding an accessory dwelling unit, which is still very expensive. He stated accessory dwelling units do not address the problem of how to control increasing taxes in Arlington. He spoke against bonuses for developers for building more than the minimum required affordable housing units, per Article 16.

Peter Bloom stated he was confused by the Arlington zoning map. In contrast, he saw a large book explaining all the angles of the Whittemore Park project, and stated the large-scale projects under discussion could use a similar treatment. He stated the Planning Board should make a greater effort to inform the public. He didn’t see why the articles couldn’t be delayed until more people were better informed.

Christian Klein spoke in favor of incentives for additional affordable units, per Article 16. He spoke in favor of Article 15, accessory dwelling units, because the number of two family homes is decreasing due to condo conversions. He would like to see subdivision bylaws addressed, as they are not well regulated. Re: Article 24 – currently, it’s possible to have a three-story house and call it a two-story if it is under a certain height, and this needs to be regulated. He recommended some changes in language as well.

Steve McKenna suggested re: Article 15, accessory dwelling units initially be allowed as in-laws by special permit; if the relative moves or dies, the unit can be rented out at affordable housing rates. Re: Article 16, he stated the bonus provision should require developers to create more affordable housing units -- inclusionary zoning. He spoke in favor of moving forward on Articles 23 and 24. Re: Article 25, he suggested changing the language as to how the driveway slope should be measured. He concluded by speaking in support of all the zoning changes.

LeeAnne Roth spoke in support of the high density zoning changes.

Don Seltzer did his own shadow studies, which he provided to the Board. The Chair stated these would be posted online. He asked if the Board is happy with the shadow studies provided by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and were they confident that they were receiving sufficient information to go forward. The Chair stated they would address this on Wednesday night.

Ben Rudick stated warned of the “cliff effect” as regards the number of buildings that would be economically viable.

Jonathan Nyberg stated that contrary to a previous speaker’s numbers, housing is tight in Arlington.

The Chair closed oral public comment. He stated the minutes would be continued to April 1.

Mr. Lau motioned to adjourn; seconded; Board voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned.